

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-06

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FM AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1883

INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

AMEMBASSY CARACAS

AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

AMEMBASSY NASSAU

AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO

AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE

AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 KINGSTON 3189

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS2

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, JM, CU

SUBJECT: JAMAICAN POLITICAL/SCENE--POSSIBLE SCENARIOS LEADING
TO SUSPENSION OF ELECTIONS AND/OR CUBAN INTERVENTION

REFS: (A) KINGSTON 2075; (B) KINGSTON 3172

1. INTRODUCTION. EMBASSY BRIEFLY OUTLINED IN REFTEL A
(PARAS 43-50) SEVERAL POSSIBLE SCENARIOS RELATING TO
POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN JAMAICA DURING THE COMING YEAR.
THEY RANGED FROM ELECTIONS AS SCHEDULED TO CUBAN INTER-
VENTION AT REQUEST OF PM MANLEY. EMBASSY WAS PREPARING
TO DISPATCH A MORE DETAILED DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT
OF THESE SCENARIOS WHEN THE STATE OF EMERGENCY (SOE)
WAS DECLARED ON JUNE 19 -- AN EVENT PROVIDED FOR AMONG
THE SCENARIOS ENVISAGED AT THAT TIME. EVEN NOW,
HOWEVER, ANY DISCUSSION OF FUTURE COURSE OF EVENTS
HERE IS AT BEST HIGHLY SPECULATIVE. THE ONLY CERTAINTY

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AT THIS POINT WOULD APPEAR TO BE THAT THE SITUATION

IS LIKELY TO CONTINUE TO DETERIORATE FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF THE OPPOSITION JAMAICA LABOR PARTY, AND OF U.S. INTERESTS IN JAMAICA. NONETHELESS, THE FOLLOWING POSSIBLE SCENARIOS ARE SPELLED OUT AS BEING AMONG THE MOST LIKELY TO EVENTUATE.

2. CONTINUATION OF SOE AND ELECTIONS. AT THE PRESENT MOMENT THIS IS THE MOST LIKELY SCENARIO. THE SOE (WHICH PRESENTLY RUNS THROUGH OCTOBER) WILL REMAIN IN EFFECT (VIA PARLIAMENTARY EXTENSIONS) UP TO OR THROUGH THE NEXT GENERAL ELECTIONS. WHILE OPPOSITION LEADER SEAGA HAS FROM TIME TO TIME TOLD THE EMBASSY THAT MANLEY WILL HOLD ELECTIONS THIS SEPTEMBER OR OCTOBER, IT NOW SEEMS MORE PROBABLE THEY WILL BE HELD AFTER NOVEMBER AND PROBABLY SOME TIME EARLY IN THE NEW YEAR. UNDER THE JAMAICAN CONSTITUTION, MANLEY IN NOVEMBER CAN CREATE SEVEN ADDITIONAL CONSTITUENCIES AND IN THE PROCESS GERRYMANDER A NUMBER OF EXISTING DISTRICTS TO THE ADVANTAGE OF GOVERNING PNP -- A TRADITIONAL ACTIVITY WITH PLENTIFUL PRECEDENTS UNDER PREVIOUS PNP AND JLP GOVERNMENTS. PRIOR TO SUCH REDISTRICTING THE MANLEY GOVERNMENT COULD IN FACT WIN 52 PERCENT OF POPULAR VOTE BUT STILL LOSE CONTROL OF HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES. WE ASSUME ELECTIONS, WHENEVER THEY ARE HELD, WILL BE MARKED BY A HIGH LEVEL OF FALSE REGISTRATIONS, BOGUS VOTING, AND INTIMIDATION OF VOTERS AND CANDIDATES. DESPITE SOE, BOTH PARTIES CURRENTLY ARE HARDED AT WORK RAISING CAMPAIGN FUNDS, DEVELOPING CAMPAIGN ORGANIZATIONS, AND SELECTING AND INTRODUCING CANDIDATES. AS INDICATED REFTEL B, OPPOSITION LEADER SEAGA AND OTHER JLP LEADERS IN RECENT WEEKS HAVE BEEN SWINGING FROM DEEP PESSIMISM TO MODERATE OPTIMISM REGARDING THE ABILITY OF THE JLP TO CONDUCT AND WIN AN ELECTION CAMPAIGN DURING THE SOE. HOWEVER, MANLEY IS CALLING THE SHOTS AND JLP AT BEST IS IN REACTIVE STANCE.

3. THUS FAR THE MANLEY GOVERNMENT HAS NOT DONE IRREPARABLE DAMAGE TO THE JLP-- AT LEAST IN THE AREA OF DETENTION OF KEY JLP MEMBERS AND LEADERS OTHER THAN SENATOR PEARNEL CHARLES. NONETHELESS, THE JLP'S

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CONCERN THAT MANLEY WILL RESPOND TO ANY SIGNIFICANT ELECTORAL THREAT BY EMASCULATING THE JLP THROUGH MORE MASSIVE DETENTIONS OR OTHER INTIMIDATION IS A LEGITIMATE ONE AND THUS REQUIRES THE JLP TO COMPAGN IN A HIGHLY RESTRAINED MANNER TO ITS OWN DETRIMENT.

4. UNDER THIS SCENARIO IT IS ASSUMED THAT POLITICAL

VIOLENCE WILL REMAIN AT A RELATIVELY LOW LEVEL--IN PART BECAUSE OF THE SOE BUT PRIMARILY BECAUSE OF RESTRAINT ON BOTH SIDES. IT ALSO IS ASSUMED, HOWEVER, THAT THE MANLEY GOVERNMENT WILL KEEP SUFFICIENT PRESSURE ON THE JLP AND TAKE WHATEVER ACTION MAY BE NECESSARY TO "ASSURE ELECTORAL VICTORY". THE LATTER MEASURES WILL TEND TO BE IN THE AREA OF STEPPED UP UTILIZATION OF TRADITIONAL JAMAICAN ELECTORAL PRACTICES, I.E. THE FALSE REGISTRATION AND BOGUS VOTING MENTIONED ABOVE -- PLUS INTIMIDATION IN THE FORM OF THREATENED SOE DETENTION, AND PROBABLE USE OF JAMAICA "CONSTRUCTION BRIGADE" JUST RETURNED FROM CUBA (SEE SEPTELS).

5. VARIATIONS ON FOREGOING. SHOULD MANLEY AND HIS RADICAL ADVISERS AT ANY TIME DETERMINE THAT A SEAGA LED JLP MIGHT WIN ELECTION EVEN UNDER THE FOREGOING CONDITIONS, IT IS PROBABLE THAT THERE WOULD BE MASSIVE STEP-UP OF PRESSURE ON THE JLP. THE OPPOSITION WOULD BE ACCUSED OF A CALCULATED CAMPAIGN OF SUBVERSION AND MANY OF ITS LEADERS WOULD BE ARRESTED OR DETAINED INCLUDING POSSIBLY SEAGA. "ACTS AND UTTERANCES" LEGISLATION WOULD BE RUSHED THROUGH PARLIAMENT, AND MANLEY WOULD USE TO FULL EXTENT HIS EMERGENCY POWERS TO CRIPPLE THE OPPOSITION AND GAG HIS CRITICS IN THE MEDIA.

6. SHOULD THE FOREGOING OCCUR, IT IS CONCEIVABLE FORMER PM HIGH SHEARER WOULD ASSUME LEADERSHIP OF THE JLP AND CONTEST THE ELECTION. HOWEVER, AT LEAST AN EQUAL POSSIBILITY IS THAT THE JLP WOULD DECLINE TO CONTEST THE ELECTIONS AS A FORM OF PROTEST, AND THAT THERE THEN WOULD BE AN ACCELERATED DRIFT TO A DE FACTO ONE PARTY SOCIALIST STATE. A FURTHER (BUT PERHAPS UNLIKELY) VARIANT IS THE POSSIBILITY THAT SEAGA AT

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SOME POINT MIGHT VOLUNTARILY STEP DOWN (SHOULD BE CONSIDER HIMSELF A MAJOR LIABILITY TO THE JLP UNDER THE SOE) AND THAT SHEARER WOULD THEN LEAD THE JLP IN ELECTIONS HELD UNDER CIRCUMSTANCES SIMILAR TO THOSE DESCRIBED IN PARAS TWO THROUGH FOUR ABOVE. IT IS REMOTELY POSSIBLE THE JLP COULD WIN AN ELECTION UNDER THIS VARIATION. MANLEY AND PNP MODERATES MIGHT BE PREPARED TO ACCEPT THE POSSIBILITY OF A JLP ELECTORAL VICTORY IF SEAGA IS OFF THE SCENE.

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LIMDIS

7. ACCELERATED VIOLENCE AND SUSPENSION OF THE ELECTORAL PROCESS. SOMEWHAT CLOSER TO THE "GANDHI" MODEL IS THE POSSIBILITY THAT AT SOME POINT MANLEY WILL, UNDER THE SOE, SUSPEND INDEFINITELY JAMAICAN ELECTORAL PROCESSES AND USE THE SOE TO THOROUGHLY EMASCULATE THE OPPOSITION. ELECTIONS SUBSEQUENTLY HELD WOULD BE A FARCE AS BY THAT TIME JAMAICA WOULD BE A DE FACTO ONE PARTY STATE. THE EXCUSE FOR SUCH A COURSE COULD FLOW FROM TRUMPED UP ACCUSATIONS OF CONSPIRACY TO OVERTHROW THE GOVERNMENT, OR ACCELERATING VIOLENCE ON THE PART OF JLP AND PNP THUGS. AT SOME POINT SEAGA MAY, AS A LAST DESPERATE MEASURE, UNLEASH HIS "TROOPS". HE MIGHT BE DELIBERATELY PROVOKED INTO DOING SO BY MANLEY AND/OR HIS RADICALS. INDEED (SHOULD EXTREMELY RADICAL ELEMENTS HERE SENSE A SEAGA ELECTORAL VICTORY) IT IS POSSIBLE SUCH A SITUATION MIGHT BE PROVOKED WITHOUT MANLEY'S ASSENT OR EVEN HIS KNOWLEDGE. IN OTHER WORDS, JAMAICA'S RADICALS COULD ACT INDEPENDENTLY TO FORCE

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SEAGA INTO A SITUATION WHICH MANLEY WOULD THEN BE
REQUIRED TO COUNTERACT.

8. POSSIBILITY OF CUBAN INTERVENTION.

THIS SCENARIO IS IN SOME RESPECTS AN EXTENSION OF THE FOREGOING. AS INDICATED IN REFTEL B, JAMAICA'S SECURITY FORCES ARE ALREADY STRETCHED TO THE BREAKING POINT AND PROBABLY COULD NOT COPE WITH A HIGH LEVEL OF VIOLENCE OCCURRING SIMULTANEOUSLY AT SEVERAL POINTS ON THE ISLAND. SHOULD THIS SITUATION UNFOLD, MANLEY MIGHT FEEL COMPELLED TO SEEK FOREIGN ASSISTANCE TO RESTORE PUBLIC ORDER. UNDOUBTEDLY, HE WOULD CHARGE THAT INSURRECTION EXISTED, AND THAT IT INVOLVED IMPERIALIST/CAPITALIST FORCES AND THEIR LOCAL AGENTS. HE WOULD THEN REQUEST ARMED ASSISTANCE FROM THE CUBAN GOVERNMENT. GIVEN THE GEOGRAPHIC PROXIMITY OF CUBA AND THE SMALL NUMBER OF CUBAN TROOPS THAT WOULD BE REQUIRED, WE ASSUME THE CUBANS COULD EASILY RESPOND TO SUCH A REQUEST ON A TIMELY BASIS. IT IS CONCEIVABLE THAT, FOR COSMETIC PURPOSES, MANLEY MIGHT FIRST REQUEST SUCH ASSISTANCE FROM LONDON, OTTAWA, OR EVEN WASHINGTON -- WITH THE FULL EXPECTATION OF BEING TURNED DOWN. HE WOULD THEN BE ABLE TO TAKE A PUBLIC POSITION THAT JAMAICA'S TRADITIONAL FRIENDS HAD REFUSED TO RESPOND IN A TIME OF CRISIS AND THAT ONLY JAMAICA'S NEW-FOUND FRIENDS -- THE CUBANS -- WERE PREPARED TO ASSIST.

9. CONCLUSION. THE LAST SCENARIO DESCRIBED ABOVE IS THE LEAST LIKELY BUT ALSO THE ONE WHICH POSES THE MOST PROBLEMS VIS-A-VIS U.S. INTERESTS. HOW IN FACT WOULD THE USG RESPOND TO AN ARMED CUBAN INTERVENTION IN JAMAICA -- IF THAT INTERVENTION IS IN RESPONSE TO THE LEGALLY CONSTITUTED GOVERNMENT OF JAMAICA? MORE LIKELY, HOWEVER, WE WILL FACT ONE OR A COMBINATION OF THE LESS EXTREME SCENARIOS POSSIBLY LEADING TO A DE FACTO ONE-PARTY STATE. AT THIS TIME, THERE EVEN REMAINS THE POSSIBILITY THAT MANLEY MAY MISREAD HIS ELECTORAL SUPPORT, TAKE INSUFFICIENT ACTION AGAINST THE OPPOSITION, AND THUS UNWITTINGLY PERMIT A SEAGA ELECTORAL VICTORY IN A BITTERLY CONTESTED BUT NEVER-THELESS STILL REASONABLY FREE AND FAIR (BY JAMAICAN

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STANDARDS) ELECTION. WE WOULD NOT PLACE ANY MONEY ON THIS ONE.

10. WHATEVER ELSE MAY HAPPEN IN THE COMING MONTHS THERE ARE TWO TANGIBLE CERTAINTIES WHICH MAY CAUSE CONSIDERABLE PROBLEMS FOR US. THE PRESENT TENUOUS TRUCE UNDER WHICH GOJ MINISTERS AND OTHER SENIOR OFFICIALS ARE

FOR THE MOST PART HOLDING BACK ON DESTABILIZING CHARGES AGAINST THE U.S. WILL BREAK DOWN FROM TIME TO TIME AND IN ALL PROBABILITY ULTIMATELY DISAPPEAR. IT NOT PROBABLE IT IS CERTAINLY HIGHLY POSSIBLE THAT AT SOME POINT THE MANLEY GOVERNMENT WILL SURFACE MANUFACTURED OR OTHER BOGUS EVIDENCE OF USG DESTABILIZATION -- INCLUDING POSSIBLY LINKS TO THE JLP. IF THIS SHOULD OCCUR WE CAN SAFELY ASSUME CUBAN INVOLVEMENT AND ENCOURAGEMENT BEHIND THE SCENES. BEYOND THE FOREGOING THE PRESENTLY DESPERATE FINANCIAL STRAITS OF THE GOJ WILL REQUIRE THE MANLEY GOVERNMENT TO PERFORM SOME RATHER EXTRAORDINARY RABBIT OUT OF THE HAT TRICKS. SOME RABBITS MAY BE RED HUED AND OTHER MIGHT BE TINGED BY BAUXITE. AT THIS POINT ALL SIGNIFICANT TRADITIONAL SOURCES OF FINANCE APPEAR TO BE DRYING UP. IF ONLY OUT OF DESPERATION, THE GOJ MAY FIND IT FINANCIALLY AND POLITICALLY EXPEDIENT TO AGAIN INCREASE THE BAUXITE LEVY. THE RED HUED RABBIT MIGHT BE NO MORE THAN A FUNNY-MONEY CREDIT DEAL WITH THE SOVIETS OR ONE OF THEIR SURROGATES. WE WOULD NOT ANTICIPATE THAT ANY OF THESE MEASURES, SHOULD THEY EVENTUATE, REPRESENT MORE THAN A TEMPORARY AND POLITICALLY NECESSARY HOLDING ACTION.

11. THE AMBASSADOR WILL BE PREPARED TO DISCUSS THE FOREGOING AND RELATED ISSUES DURING HIS CONSULTATIONS IN WASHINGTON LATER THIS WEEK.

GERARD

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